

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of Claims will replace all prior revisions and listings of Claims in the application:

Claims 1- 4 (Canceled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A surgical access device for permitting access to body tissue, which comprises:

an access member dimensioned for introduction into body tissue, the access member defining a longitudinal axis and having a longitudinal passage to permit introduction of an object; and

a seal comprising a fabric material and being disposed within the access member, the seal having inner portions defining an aperture extending therethrough adapted to expand from an initial open condition to an expanded open condition upon passage of the object in substantial sealed relation therewith, the seal having a general tapered portion.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): The surgical access device according to claim 5 wherein the seal is a septum seal.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 5 wherein the seal is elongated and extends along the longitudinal axis of the access member.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): The surgical access device according to claim 7 wherein the seal defines a general hourglass configuration.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The surgical access device according to claim 7 wherein the tapered portion of the seal defines a general conical configuration.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 5 wherein the seal includes an outer layer of an elastomeric material.

Claims 11 – 21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 5 wherein the inner portions of the seal are dimensioned to form a substantial sealed relation with a surgical instrument introduced within the aperture.

Claim 23 (Canceled).

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A surgical access device, which comprises:
an access member dimensioned for insertion into body tissue to provide access through the body tissue and to an underlying surgical site, the access member defining a longitudinal axis and having a throughbore to permit passage of an object toward the surgical site; and
a seal comprising a fabric material and being disposed relative to the access member, the seal including a general tapered portion and having inner portions adapted to permit passage of the object and to form a substantial sealed relation with the object.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 24 wherein the seal includes an elastomeric material.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The surgical seal assembly according to claim 25 wherein the fabric material of the seal is at least partially embedded in the elastomeric material of the seal.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The surgical seal assembly according to claim 26 wherein the inner portions of the seal define an aperture adapted to expand from an initial condition to an expanded condition upon passage of the object and in substantial sealed relation therewith.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to Claim 5 wherein the seal includes a resilient material.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 28 wherein the fabric material comprises a layer of fabric material.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The surgical access device according to claim 29 wherein a layer of fabric material is disposed on each of opposed surfaces of the resilient material.

Claim 31 (Withdrawn): The surgical access device according to claim 28 wherein the resilient material comprises at least two layers of resilient material and the fabric material comprises at least one layer of fabric material at least partially disposed between the at least two layers of resilient material.